



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 27 January 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
27 JANUARY 1967

1. South Vietnam

Lieutenant General Cao Van Vien, named this morning to replace the ousted General Co as South Vietnam's defense minister, is a competent professional soldier who has steered reasonably clear of politics. The 45-year-old, French trained Vien has been chief of the Joint General Staff since late 1965 and he will continue wearing that hat too.

Vien, incidentally, is probably the only South Vietnamese general officer wounded in combat with the Viet Cong while holding that rank. The military Directorate turned down Vien's own suggestion that a civilian be appointed.

2. South Vietnam

There will be a serious rice shortage after the New Year celebrations in February unless the Saigon government moves quickly to import more. Prices are rising now as Vietnamese lay in extra stocks for the holidays, 8-15 February, and the supply is at a very low level.

3. Venezuela



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4. Communist China

We see more signs that Mao may be having trouble getting the army 100 percent behind him.

Posters in recent days have strongly criticized some key military officers once in the Mao-Lin camp. Criticism of these officers could indicate that their support--essential for implementing Mao's recent directive for the army to support his faction--has been something less than wholehearted.

There are also some hints that certain local military units are not vigorously supporting the pro-Mao forces.

5. United Kingdom

The Wilson - De Gaulle talks appear to have demonstrated once again Paris' serious reservations about British membership in the Common Market. However, Wilson does seem to have elicited a magnanimous "perhaps" rather than an icy "no." He is taking advantage of this to stress that the talks were friendly and none of the difficulties insurmountable. No major decisions were sought, and none appear imminent.

6. Ethiopia

The Emperor is getting ready for his trip to Washington next month.

He has decreed that there will be no anti-American articles in the Ethiopian press until after his talk with President Johnson.

50X1

27 Jan 67

50X1

7. Congo

Union Minière has moved a little off dead center, but even if negotiations with Mobutu do begin, they will be prolonged and ulcer-making. Meanwhile the Congo will be hard pressed to meet its foreign exchange requirements of over \$20 million a month.

8. Saudi Arabia

Egyptian planes from Yemen today bombed a Saudi border town. This bombing could have been accidental but King Faysal, recalling other "accidental" bombings of the same town, will not think so.

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9. Nicaragua

Stern measures by the National Guard are keeping things quiet. Several respected Nicaraguans, citing alleged government brutalities, have approached our embassy on the possibility of US intervention. General Somoza is still making campaign speeches, but his opponent--who was responsible for Sunday's riot--is sitting silent in his tent.

27 Jan 67

50X1

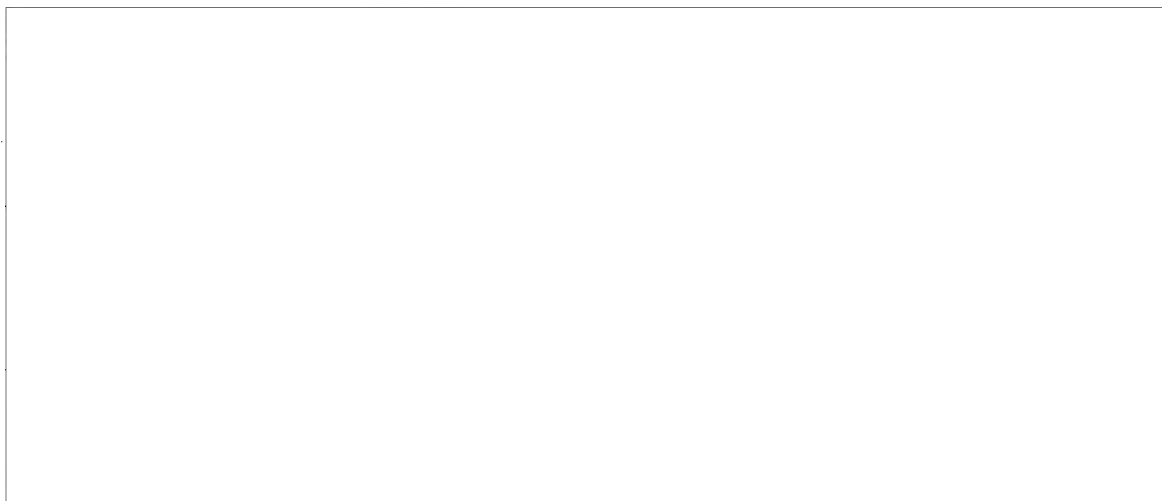
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27 Jan 67

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27 Jan 67

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